

tries to play pool but scratches on the eight
to play volleyball and always lands on his
gut to woo an ugly rich girl and she
marries a queer.

so here is my poem:

joe you are a bore
joe you eat shit
joe you are a loser and i don't feel compassion
joe when you move next week it will leave
absolutely no ellipsis in my life
joe the only good thing i can say about you is
that you once introduced me to a girl with
truly himalayan tits.

christmas at sunset beach: a sequel

starved for seasonal pyrotechnics, the young
assassins (who would have preferred to detonate
a berkeley or a white house) have blown the oil
refinery to kingdom will not come.

the sky hangs black above the chanukah bush.
a weather satellite caroms in its obscure
orbit towards el bethlehem, where, in an
aluminum kibbutz, a child is born with one eye.

nobody raises an eye from the ed sullivan show.
the mormon tabernacle choir is chanting
god save the king. and i, i am getting
it through my thick skull that jazz is dead

with coltrane, religion with pope john,
contemplation with the mahareshi, the
corrida with arruza, america with
malcolm x, and maternity with the mothers

of invention. love died last week at
a love-in, baseball with mickey mantle,
poetry the early morning that i polished up
my elegy for coltrane and the girl with braces

that i didn't want to bang. my friends and i are
clever as devils and write a lot of poems --
ornamental, bright, symmetrical as christmas
trees -- but poetry is dead.

we go through the paces now, hoping
it is just a temporary imbalance of the
endocrines and that a year from now we'll
be embarrassed by these meanderings.

meanwhile, it should be a great year for nostalgia.
(who, for instance, wrote the lone ranger???...)

Star Trek

She must in early adolescence have had
bad skin because her face is slightly scarred.
Otherwise she is a flower, a bruised
and unforgetting flower, apprehensive

of being plucked. and scared to death
of withering on the vine. Tonight she is
no flower. she is a bird without a song,
a bird whose song civilization has muted.

This afternoon she thought she was
a courtesan at Akbar's palace, learned
in the arts, esteemed alike by warriors
and wives and poets. At any rate

she'd like to be a whore of some degree
but vestiges of pedigree have kept
her a virgin. Tomorrow morning she will
put on blinders and a college sweatshirt.

This once the prudes are right -- deflowering
will be the death of her, anti-climax
of twenty years of preliminary play,
a sofa agony, Star Trek on the telly.

37

it is the third movement of my second
piano concerto (the only one that i
have yet begun) and in it acquiesces
the fleugelhorns of the ghetto and

a white boy in a sailboat doing no one
harm. in development i take
the keys to the kingdom, the key
to the city, and the ring of the nibelung